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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/ERA

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TAGS: PREL EUN PL

SUBJECT: POLAND-EU: GOP THOUGHTS ON THE JUNE 18-19 GAERC

REF: STATE 80034

Classified By: Political Counselor Mary T. Curtin, reasons 1.4(b)&(d)

¶1. (C) Pol External Chief delivered reftel GAERC demarche June 14 to Pawel Herczynski, Deputy Director, MFA EU Department. Please find below Herczynski's responses on individual agenda items.

¶2. (C) Cuba: Herczynski noted that the PSC had decided June 13 after a long and bitter discussion to make no change to the existing EU Common Position. He said that Poland had consistently maintained its opposition to the Spanish proposals to weaken the Common Position and the suspended Restrictive measures, despite an "unprecedented campaign" by the Spanish government - including calls by the Spanish Ambassador in Warsaw to "a hundred senior officials" and calls from the Spanish PolDir to two MFA Undersecretaries in an effort to gain Poland's support. FM Anna Fotyga personally took the decision to stand firm against the Spanish. According to Herczynski, Poland had two priorities in the COLAT and PSC discussions on Cuba language for the GAERC conclusions: a clause referring to a structured review of the Common Position, and a clause on the need to develop a long-term EU Strategy for Cuba. Once the PSC agreed on including the review language, the Polish delegation finally stood down on its demand for strategy language, but only after a long hold out as the only member state blocking consensus - and with the understanding that future GAERC meetings would reconsider the issue.

¶3. (C) European Neighborhood: Herczynski said that the GOP's main priority on ENP was to ensure that the Eastern Neighbors got as much attention as the Southern Neighbors. He acknowledged the German initiative to pay more attention to the Black Sea region, but noted that it left out Belarus and sidelined Ukraine - the two most important Eastern partners in Polish eyes. To this end, the Polish delegation would push for inclusion of a clause on Eastern Neighbors in the GAERC conclusions. Failing acceptance of that proposal by the PSC, the Poles would force an ad hoc discussion of the Eastern Neighbors in the GAERC itself. (Note: Several senior officials have expressed to us their concern about the German emphasis on the Black Sea rather than Eastern neighbors since the beginning of the German presidency. End Note)

¶4. (C) Serbia: Herczynski noted that Poland had been one of the strongest supporters in the EU of ICTY conditionality for reopening the Serbian SAA negotiations. Now that the decision has been taken to reopen the talks, Poland has shifted its position to insist on ICTY compliance before the SAA negotiations can be concluded. (COMMENT: Although Herczynski did not have any response on Kosovo issues, we note that Poland has been one of the most vocal supporters and advocates of the Ahtisaari Plan.)

¶5. (C) MEPP: Herczynski did not have any comments on the MEPP, but he did note that there was a strong possibility that the EU Foreign Ministers would meet after the GAERC lunch with the Israeli FM. This was in part to offer Israel "equal treatment" following meetings at the previous GAERC with Arab League FM's.

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